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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Items 20 (c) and 45 of the
provisional agenda*
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: EMERGENCY INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR PEACE, NORMALCY AND RECONSTRUCTION OF WAR-STRICKEN AFGHANISTAN
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 11 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on 11 August 1998 (see annex).

I should be very grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, under items 20 (c) and 45 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Tajikistan to the
United Nations

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ANNEX

[Original: Russian]

Statement issued by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on 11 August 1998

It is with growing alarm and deep concern that the entire international community has observed the recent events in northern Afghanistan. The Republic of Tajikistan, while reaffirming its adherence to the fundamental principles of international relations and international law, has always advocated, and continues to advocate, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. However, the serious deterioration of the military and political situation in a neighbouring country as a result of the large-scale military operations carried out by the Taliban movement cannot but alarm Tajikistan, which shares an extensive border with Afghanistan. Of particular concern is the fact that the Afghan conflict is being directly and actively fuelled by external forces, since this not only aggravates the situation in that country and jeopardizes the maintenance of its integrity, but also represents a genuine threat to the security of the entire Central Asian region.

Tajikistan has already observed disturbing symptoms of the escalation of military activities in Afghanistan, in the form of a sharp deterioration in the military and humanitarian situation at the Tajik-Afghan border and a significant flow of Afghan refugees towards the southern border of our country, which indicates that Tajikistan is likely to witness a massive and disorderly inflow of refugees into its territory.

Obviously, no account is being taken either of the international community's efforts to bring about a political settlement of the armed conflict in Afghanistan or of the Afghan people's desire to preserve the integrity of the State, and this has given rise to a real and direct threat against national interests and security in the countries bordering on Afghanistan and in the entire Central Asian region. For this reason, out of its strong desire to prevent any further escalation of military operations in that country, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan calls upon:

- The parties to the conflict in Afghanistan to stop this senseless bloodshed and to open direct negotiations with a view to achieving a peaceful settlement and reaching compromise agreements, taking into account the interests of all ethnic, religious and political segments of Afghan society;

- The States parties to the Treaty on Collective Security and the Chairman of the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Mr. Boris Yeltsin, to take the necessary steps to strengthen security in the southern part of the Commonwealth;

- The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, to take urgent steps for the immediate cessation of hostilities, the opening of negotiations on a political settlement of the conflict in

Afghanistan and the prohibition of all foreign interference in the Afghan conflict.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, which has repeatedly informed the international community of its position on the Afghan problem, remains convinced that the crisis in Afghanistan must be settled exclusively through peaceful political means and that the civil war which has ravaged that country for so many years must be brought to an end.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan stands ready to contribute to the speedy settlement of the Afghan crisis.